managerial guidance, consultancy, supply project profiles, conduct various economic surveys, potential surveys, provide extension services and common facilities for small scale and also disseminate all kinds of data and information relating to exports and indigenous market situations, and all other schemes/projects/programmes launched by Government from time to time. Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship has been set up at Guwahati to cater to local needs. A Tool Room and Training Centre is also being set up at Guwahati at an estimated cost of Rs. 13.28 crore, to design and manufacture tools, dies and jigs, Fixtures, etc., impart training in these areas and introduce CAD/CAM to facilitate manufacture of tools. National Small Industries Corporation is having a Regional Office and a Demonstration-cum-Training Centre at Guwahati to promote and support the SSI units in Assam. It also supplies indigenous and imported machines under its hire-purchase and equipment leasing scheme, provides marketing support and raw material assistance, enlists small scale units for government supply, conducts training programmes etc.

Hurdles faced by SSIs

312. SHRI H. K. JAVARE GOWDA: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the small and medium industries in the country are facing heavy burden of untenable constraints and hurdles in promoting their business;

(b) whether the interest rates offered is more for small industry than the housing loans; and

(c) if so, the details of the steps Government proposed to take to promote the small scale industries in the country?

THE MINISTER OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES (DR. C. P. THAKUR): (a) The small and medium industries face the problems of inadequate availability and high cost of credit, inadequate infrastructure, marketing bottlenecks, obsolete technology, and enhanced competition due to globalization, W.T.O. and removal of Quantitative Restrictions, etc.

(b) As per the Reserve Bank of India, some banks are extending housing loans at an interest rate lower than Prime Lending Rate (PLR).

(c) While development of Small Scale Industries is primarily the responsibility of the State/UT Governments, the Central Government has taken several steps to improve their performace by implementing various schemes for Integrated Infrastructure Development, technology upgradation, marketing and entrepreneurial development etc. In addition, on 30th August 2000, the Prime Minister announced a Comprehensive Policy Package for the promotion and development of Small Scale Sector to enhance its competitiveness, both domestically and globally.The policy package consists of enhanced fiscal and credit support, better infrastructure and marketing facilities and incentives for technology upgradation.

Postponement of 'Mission to Moon' Programme

†313. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI:
SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to postpone the space programme 'Mission to Moon' if not, by when the project would be completed and the amount likely to be spent thereon;

(b) whether this project has been taken up to maintain parity with the neighbouring countries; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SPACE (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir. The National Task Team's technical report on the proposed unmanned mission to moon is under review. Only after considering all aspects, including the scientific objectives, the cost and schedule of the project will be available.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Meteorological Satellite

314. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the second week of September, 2002, ISRO successfully launched METSAT;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.